

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
233 S. Soangetaha Road  
Galesburg, IL 61401  
(309)342-5714

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Section of Environmental Analysis  
Surface Transportation Board  
1925 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20423-0001

7/31/2006

Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub. No. 431X) BNSF Railway Company – Abandonment  
Exemption - in Knox and Fulton Counties, IL

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in reply to a request for written comments in reference to the above listed docket number. I have no additional comments to make other than from my two previous responses from April 11, 2006 and September 30, 2005, both of which are attached.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald A. Hall".

Ronald A. Hall  
District Conservationist  
Knox County, IL

Cc: Sidney Strickland, Jr.

AB 6-431X  
EI-2495  
CD



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
233 S. Soangetaha Road  
Galesburg, IL 61401  
Phone: (309)342-5714  
Fax: (309)342-2259

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Mr. Sidney Strickland  
Sidney Strickland and Associates, PLLC  
3050 K Street N.W. Suite 101  
Washington, DC 2007-5108

April 11, 2006

RE: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub. No. 431X) BNSF Railway Company – Abandonment and  
Discontinuance Exemption – in Knox and Fulton Counties, IL

Dear Mr. Strickland,

This letter is in reply to your request for comments regarding the effect that a proposed railroad abandonment will have on prime agricultural lands in Knox County.

Last year I submitted comments regarding this original request (see copy attached dated September 30, 2005). Since there has been no significant change in the proposed actions, I am resubmitting my original letter to serve as comments from this office for your new letter dated March 17, 2006.

As before, please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions regarding this matter at (309) 342-5714, extension 3.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald A. Hall".

Ronald A. Hall  
District Conservationist  
Knox County

CC: Bob McCleese, State Soil Scientist, USDA, NRCS, Champaign, IL  
Robert Dean, ASTC-4 USDA, NRCS, Galesburg, IL



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Mr. Sidney Strickland  
Sidney Strickland and Associates, PLLC  
3050 K St. N.W. Suite 101  
Washington, DC, 2007-5108

September 30, 2005

RE: BNSF Railway Company Abandonment between Yates City at Milepost 4780 and Canton at Milepost 63.9, AB-6-431X

Dear Mr. Strickland,

This letter is in reply to your request regarding whether or not the proposed abandonment of a railroad line south of Yates City in Knox County will have any effect on prime agricultural lands in the vicinity of the abandonment. Your original request and map are attached for reference.

Upon review of the area, I have found that most of the rail line in question runs through prime agricultural land, particularly at the northern most reach of the area just south of Yates City. Farther south, near the County line, prime agricultural land is immediately west of the rail line, while much of the land immediately east of the rail line has been strip mined.

While much of the rail line is located on prime agricultural lands, I do not see any effect that the proposed work will have on the prime agricultural land nearby.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions regarding this matter at (309)342-5714.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald A. Hall".

Ronald A. Hall  
District Conservationist  
Knox County

Cc: Bob McCleese, State Soil Scientist, USDA, NRCS, Champaign, IL  
Robert Dean, ASTC, USDA, NRCS, Galesburg, IL